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ART. VII.—*A Discourse on the Genius and Character of the Rev. Horace Holley, LL. D. late President of Transylvania University*, by CHARLES CALDWELL, M. D. Professor of the Institutes of Medicine and Clinical Practice in said University; *with an Appendix, containing copious Notes, Biographical and Illustrative.* Boston. 1828. Hilliard, Gray, Little, & Wilkins.

It is very frequently remarked, that the lives of literary men are barren of incident. That of president Holley was perhaps less so than the lives of literary men generally are, in this country; but it still furnishes no exception to the rule. The history of such men is necessarily a record of the exercise of intellectual power, in the various duties of the professional career, rarely varied by the occurrence of events of a novel and marked character. This circumstance, while it increases the difficulty of preparing a biographical account of their lives, filled with details of general interest, makes it still more the duty of those, who knew their worth, who enjoyed the benefit of their efforts, and witnessed the displays of their talent, to contribute, in every proper way, to the preservation of their memory. The man, who discharges faithfully the duties of the academical or of the spiritual instructor, and especially the man who discharges them, not only with fidelity, but with extraordinary skill and vigor, who brings to them the energies of a brilliant genius, and the fruits of mature studies, ought to rank among the greatest benefactors of his generation. But yet, from the very necessity of the case, his merit is not embodied (if we may so speak) in any series of striking actions or events, to which posterity can be referred, in proof of its extent and reality. A process precisely the reverse of that, which takes place in the lives of statesmen and heroes, and which gives to them the credit of much that is done by those about them, operates in the case of him, whose life is passed in forming the minds of others, and deprives him of much of the praise which is his due. The prince or the chief magistrate, whose administration has been signalized by important events, beneficial to the country, enjoys a distinguished place in history, and a full share of the glory of transactions, of which perhaps the larger portion of the credit really belongs to the subaltern agents. A military chief of necessity concentrates

upon himself the renown of victories, to which thousands may have contributed as much conduct and gallantry as himself. On the other hand, we are too apt to give to the pupil the whole of the credit, which is due in part to the master who formed his mind. The influence of intellect on intellect is too elevated, undefined, and ethereal to admit of a gross partition of the praise. The eloquent writer, the eloquent speaker, and the accomplished scholar receive the undivided applause of the community, which witnesses the display of their talents and acquisitions; and it is an afterthought and a tardy justice which go back and give credit to the aid, the counsel, and the discipline, which have perhaps contributed most essentially to these displays. It frequently happens, in the case of men whose eminence is purely intellectual, and who are not engaged in the academic career, that they exercise a powerful influence on society around them; that they contribute to raise and purify the standard of taste, to set other men on thinking and on acting, and are in reality the authors, in this way, of substantial improvement; that there is nevertheless not enough of visible action in their lives, to furnish the basis of any adequate memorial. They live in the hearts of their contemporaries. A grateful tradition of them goes down for a few generations. Some fine traits of their characters, and a few happy expressions, are repeated and recollected, and then all that they were is lost and forgotten. This has been the fortune of many excellent men in our own country, who, having written little or nothing of a permanent nature, have left nothing behind them, but a tradition, daily growing weaker, of characters and services, inestimable in their day and generation.

These considerations lead us to rejoice in every successful attempt, to commemorate an individual of merit, belonging to the class of society, in which life is unmarked by incident and adventure, but in which a full proportion of the actual service of the community is performed. They lead us to rejoice in the appearance of the present work, furnishing, as it does, a satisfactory, and, we trust, a permanent memorial of a man of rare talent, of uncommon mental vigor, and of brilliant accomplishments, exercised during a short but distinguished career. It appears to us well calculated to satisfy the curiosity, which the public naturally takes in the life of such a man. It presents his character and his various official relations in a light, which must be satisfactory and consoling to his friends.

It does justice to his merit. It will afford to aftertimes, no inadequate conception of the peculiarity of his intellect. The narrative portion of it is more replete with interest, than can often happen in the case of similar biographies. President Holley's existence was marked with more than a common share of variety, and from the termination of his studies at college, to the melancholy close of his career, an unusual diversity of incident and scene will be found to be comprehended.

The work before us, as our readers are probably, for the most part, aware, consists of a Discourse on the Genius and Character of president Holley, illustrated with copious Notes. The former is the production of an academic associate, drawn forth by the request of the medical class of Transylvania University, on occasion of the decease of its late president. It is of the nature of a philosophical analysis of his mind, and extends to a general account of his intellectual and moral character, and of the quality of his action in the various official positions to which he was called. Dr Caldwell remarks, in an early page of his discourse, that 'the elements of that intellectual greatness, high cultivation, and moral excellency, which rendered president Holley an object so imposing and attractive, are to be found in his character as a scholar, a philosopher, an orator, a teacher, and a man'; and the discourse is chiefly taken up, with the description of him in these several capacities. In the various portions of this description, Dr Caldwell has interspersed his own views and speculations on different topics, and has given to the whole the appearance of an elaborate and carefully digested performance. In the great variety of topics, necessarily passed in review in such a discourse, few persons will be found to think alike on all. Dr Caldwell, with all the just and fervid admiration entertained and expressed by him of his subject, occasionally uses a measured language of eulogy, and has evidently aimed throughout at impartiality and truth. It would scarcely be expected of us to undertake an analysis of a performance of this character; nor would it be hardly decorous to enter upon a minute criticism of matters of taste. Embodied as it is, and even standing at the head of the biographical memorials of Dr Holley, contained in the Appendix, it is likely to enjoy an extent of circulation

and a permanence, which seldom fall to the lot of the best occasional productions.*

The Appendix contains, in the form of Notes to the different parts of the discourse, a series of notices of the life of president Holley; and in these, of course (Dr Caldwell having purposely forborne to treat the subject in that respect), the biographical interest of the work is contained. Several of these notes, particularly those which are of a biographical character, are from the pen of the individual most nearly affected by the premature decease of president Holley, and are written with a simplicity and ease, which would do credit to a practised author. They constitute a sketch of unusual spirit and interest, and represent their distinguished subject in the happiest light. We are sensible of the injustice which we do to a performance, that owes so much of its attraction to the gracefulness of manner in which it presents itself, by an attempt to abridge it into a matter-of-fact abstract. Those, who feel an interest in president Holley's character, must recur to the volume itself; and cannot fail to lay it down, with their impressions of his talent and worth rendered deeper and stronger.

President Holley was descended from the celebrated Dr Edmund Halley, and was blessed with parents of uncommon worth. The father appears to have been endowed with an understanding, and to have formed to himself a character of a very high order. The following account of himself, furnished by this excellent and uncommon man, to his son the president, exhibits a fair sample of the best kind of the true New England character.

“After I had advanced towards manhood, say sixteen or seventeen, my father was ill for a number of years. My two elder brothers were of age and gone from home. It fell, therefore, to my lot to carry on the farm. I worked hard during the day, and at night had to go after doctors and medicine. As doctors were then scarce, I had often to go eight or nine miles, when I was so weary that I have fallen asleep on my horse and rode for miles without knowing where I was, contriving to balance, however, so as to keep my seat. This I mention to show the practice and habits at that early day.

* We would suggest the expediency of comprising in the new edition of this work, which we are happy to hear is proposed, the eloquent discourse delivered by Mr Pierpont on the death of president Holley.

“ My father continued ill for years after I was of age, but, by my own exertions and the persevering industry of my mother and sisters, we lived in good style for that day, and punctually paid every demand. I worked at different places for two years, got forward, clothed myself well, and had something beforehand. But when at work upon a plough one day I cut my knee, and lay ten or twelve weeks under the care of the doctors, expecting to have my leg taken off. But on opening the swelling my knee got well, but was stiff. After the pain had ceased, and I was yet too weak to work, I concluded some other course must be fallen upon for a support. I studied hard to qualify myself to keep school. I succeeded so well that I obtained a small school the following winter, and gave so much satisfaction that I was engaged also for the next. In the course of the summer my knee became strong, and I was able to labor, keeping school in the winter, as agreed upon, at a higher price. The next summer, I worked my father's farm on shares ; but the season was bad, my crops were light, and I lost a horse which I owed for in part. I was therefore again reduced to a level with the world.

“ This you will say was discouraging and no time to marry. I was, notwithstanding, actually negotiating with your mother, and in the following October we were married. Soon after, I began my school and taught through the winter, the wages enabling me to pay the residue for my dead horse, and get myself well clothed. The following spring I was applied to, by a committee from Salisbury, to keep school in that place, they having received a flattering account of my success where I had taught. I agreed for six months, for seven dollars and fifty cents a month, which was then a great price. This term, I fulfilled my duties so much to the satisfaction of the district, that they hired me for another year at a still higher price. I then purchased a small house in the furnace neighborhood, Salisbury, and began to keep house. There Milton, yourself, and Edward were born. I continued to keep the school for three years, the salary being raised to five pounds a month, wheat being four shillings a bushel, or what was called the old way, continental money having begun to depreciate.

“ I grew tired of keeping school, and an offer being made, I went into trade on commission, in which business I continued two years, having acquired three hundred dollars. This brought me down to nearly the close of the war. I then formed a partnership with William Davis of Sharon. We made a large purchase of goods of Richard Smith of New London, who, being in Holland, had assisted our government, in its struggle, to procure a quantity of gunpowder. For this service, the legislature of Connecticut granted him the privilege of bringing into the country twenty or thirty thousand dollars' worth of dry goods. This purchase of

Richard Smith was made late in the fall, and in the following spring came the news of peace. The price of goods fell. Mr Davis, discouraged, sold out for little or nothing, and quit business. I worried through, paid Smith, and cleared something.

“In June, 1783, I formed a partnership with Read and Bogardus, who were large importers, and lived in the city of New York. This business was carried on in the most satisfactory manner, and I continued in business alone till we moved to Redhook, on the Hudson, in 1794.” pp. 110—112.

The letters of this most sensible father and excellent man, form by no means the least interesting portion of the volume, and show us a character, which wanted nothing but adventitious circumstances, to have come out among those which take the lead in their generation. A single circumstance, giving him notoriety with the public at large, might have formed him into one of the distinguished men of his day. We cannot but observe, in passing, that president Holley's letter to his elder brother, on his father's death, is a happy specimen of his manner.

Such of our readers, as may not have an opportunity to read the work before us, will thank us for a brief sketch of president Holley's history. He was born at Salisbury in Connecticut, on the thirteenth of February, 1781. Blessed at his birth with a sound and healthful frame, no physical infirmities checked the expansion of his faculties. He was placed at a common district school in the neighborhood of his father's house, when he was little more than three years old, and discovered a fondness, not usual with children, for school and its duties.

‘The first ten years of his life passed in this way, chiefly at school or in such light labor as was suited to his years, and which, intermingled with the customary sports of childhood, served both to develope his corporeal powers, and to give a healthful tone to his mind. With such faculties, and such a disposition to use them, he soon became familiar with the common rudiments of knowledge; and as nothing further was to be acquired at a district school, he was permitted to avail himself of other modes of gratifying his active spirit. His father, in addition to the cultivation of a farm, was pretty extensively engaged in country trade, which gave occasion to the transportation of considerable quantities of produce and merchandise, and to many errands of business from home. New York was then, as now, the ultimate market for that quarter of the country, and intercourse with it then was, as it still

is, carried on through the freighting villages on the Hudson river. A drive to Redhook, or Rhinebeck, or Poughkeepsie, on a smooth road, through a cultivated and pleasant district, with a pair of good horses, under independent circumstances, and charged with business, was no repulsive employment to a boy of manly temper and enterprising spirit. It was well adapted to promote many valuable ends. It was calculated to help forward a knowledge of men and things—of the modes of business and the relative values of commodities—to throw a youth in a beneficial way upon his own resources, and to aid in giving firmness and tone to character; and in this kind of occupation, this new school of practical education, was Horace frequently and cheerfully engaged, while yet a boy of twelve or thirteen years of age, the promptitude, accuracy, and fidelity with which he discharged his trust, always bringing tokens of parental approbation.' pp. 119, 120.

It had been his father's intention to bring up his son to his own pursuits in trade, but the strong desire, evinced by the latter, to obtain a liberal education, at length induced his father to consent to his preparing himself for college. Accordingly in 1797, at the age of sixteen years, he was placed at a school in Williamstown, Massachusetts, connected with the college in that place, with the view, when the proper time should arrive, of being entered as a student in that seminary. Conceiving, however, that the college at New Haven afforded greater advantages, he changed his destination, and was entered in 1799 a student at Yale. Here he was distinguished among the most industrious and successful of his contemporaries, and enjoyed a large share of the favor of the eminent president of the college, the late Dr Dwight. In his senior year, he became the subject of serious religious impressions, during what is usually termed a *revival* of religion, in New Haven. To this circumstance is partly to be ascribed his early abandoning the study of the law (to which he at first devoted himself), for that of divinity.

In the summer of 1804, Mr Holley established himself at New Haven as a student of divinity under the direction of Dr Dwight. In the following year, he formed a matrimonial connexion with the lady who is left to deplore his loss, and to commemorate his worth. In September 1805, he was ordained as pastor over the church at Greenfield Hill, thus becoming the successor of his master, president Dwight, who had been transferred from that church to the scene of his more extended usefulness and brilliant reputation as president of Yale Col-

lege.* The society stipulated to give him five hundred and sixty dollars per annum, 'as long as said society and Mr Holley could agree.' There never was the slightest disaffection between them, but after the experience of nearly three years, it was found by Mr Holley, that a salary of five hundred and sixty dollars, was an inadequate support for a family, of which the head, devoted to study and ministerial labors, was unable to pursue any subsidiary occupation. An amicable dissolution of the pastoral connexion was accordingly sought and obtained.

A short time only elapsed, before his settlement on the eighth of March, 1809, in the Hollis-street church in Boston. 'This connexion,' observes his biographer, 'continued for ten years; and perhaps no society and minister ever lived together more harmoniously, he giving to that excellent people the most entire and perfect satisfaction, and receiving from them every demonstration of affection and esteem.' The following extract will convey an idea of the manner, in which a portion of his duties as a preacher and a christian minister were discharged.

'His sermons were generally extemporaneous, or, if written, were seldom finished, but left to be filled out by the suggestions of the moment. His method of composing, or of preparing them, was as follows. His mind, being ever active, was richly stored with information on all subjects. He never forgot anything he had once learned, and he learned all things accurately and definitely. Whatever he read or saw in his walks during the week, was made tributary to his Sabbath exercises. Frequently a visit, or an accidental conversation with one of themselves, would furnish the train of thought upon which his hearers hung with intense interest, while its unconscious author, surprised and delighted, could easily follow in another a course of reasoning, which he could not by himself pursue. Hence these sermons were always practical, always addressed to the heart and understanding; and hence, in part, their power.

'It was his custom to enter his study on Saturday evening, and remain there until a late hour, more for the purpose of reflection than composition, to arrange the plan of a discourse, and to make notes. After a few hours' sleep, he was again in his study, when he would suffer no interruption, either for breakfast, or from any other circumstance. This was particularly the case when there was anything remarkable in the subject or the occasion. He then

* Rather let us say, the University at New Haven, a title to which this excellent seminary is most amply entitled.

entered the church with his whole mind fired with his theme, and rivetted all attention for an hour or more, with scarcely a recurrence to his notes. If the evening service required a similar effort, he ate no dinner. If he dined, he would take a familiar subject and treat it less elaborately, as he could not so soon again excite his mind to the necessary point of ardor, when it had once been suffered to cool. He preferred, however, not to be interrupted until the services of the day were finished, when his mind still dwelt with pleasure on the thoughts which had so filled and engrossed it. It may be supposed that by so long an abstinence, and such a great and continued effort, considerable exhaustion was necessarily induced. It was then he enjoyed a social circle with his family, and and two or three friends, who loved to discourse upon the strains of eloquence which had not yet died upon the ear, and whose salutary influence still warmed the heart, and excited the understanding.

‘Monday was always devoted to parochial visits, which were used as occasions for discovering what improvement of the discourse had been made by the devoted listeners of the preceding day. This kind of intercourse suggested topics for other discourses. Persons in affliction or want were first attended to. The meanest were not neglected, all were benefited, all had lessons of instruction and pleasure. The other members of his parish had different portions of the week devoted to them, and thus a new stock of materials was gathered for the coming Sabbath.’ pp. 143—145.

In 1815, Dr Holley was elected to the presidency of Transylvania University, but did not then accept the trust. In 1817, the election was renewed, and after a visit to Lexington, to examine into the condition and prospects of the institution, he accepted the appointment; and in 1818 entered upon the discharge of its duties. He remained in this office about nine years, during which the institution rose with astonishing rapidity, from the insignificant state in which he found it, into one of great reputation and crowded resort. Very interesting details are given, in the volume before us, relative to the history of this place of education, and the efforts and agency of Dr Holley as its president. They form one of the most valuable parts of the work, but for various reasons, we shall not attempt to abridge this portion of it. It is sufficient to observe, that causes of dissatisfaction arose, and that Dr Holley determined to leave the institution, where he had reason to think his usefulness was declining. This determination he carried into effect in the spring of 1827. The following letter from the trustees, at that period, is a grateful testimonial to his character.

“ *Lexington, Kentucky, March 24th, 1827.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ The Trustees of Transylvania University, being deeply impressed with a sense of the value and importance of your faithful and distinguished services in presiding over the institution for nearly nine years past, have appointed the undersigned a committee to express to you their decided approbation of the course you have pursued, in the discharge of the arduous duties which devolved upon you.

“ When they recollect that during the sixteen years which preceded your coming amongst us, only twenty-two persons received the collegiate honors of this institution, and that during your comparatively short stay, six hundred and sixty-six young men have graduated and gone forth into the world, learned, enlightened, and adorned—and who are now the pride and ornaments of our common country—they cannot but deeply regret the causes which have induced you to separate yourself from the institution.

“ Within the walls of Transylvania, the fond recollections of her polite, kind, generous, learned, accomplished, and much loved President will never perish. The patronage of the Commonwealth may be withdrawn, the institution may decline, the walls themselves may be crumbled; but so long as the name remains, there will be associated with it the most affectionate remembrances that flow from mutual attachments, or have a habitation in the hearts of those who are susceptible of the emotions of gratitude. To whatever clime your destiny may direct you, you will be pursued by the esteem and confidence of those who have been so long and so intimately associated with you; and whom we on this occasion represent. Farewell.” pp. 215, 216.

On his retirement from the presidency at Lexington, Dr Holley proposed a plan of private education to the parents of some of his former pupils, of which the general nature appears from the subjoined sketch.

“ 1. That the number of pupils be so regulated as not to exceed the power of the instructors to superintend them. 2. Instructors and pupils to constitute a family, embracing all the ties, associations, and sympathies of that union of intimate and friendly relations. This arrangement would give rise to a community in study, travelling, observing, and in such interesting adventures as might occur; all of which might be turned to the advantage of the pupil. 3. Course of study in the languages necessary in a complete education; namely, English, French, Spanish, Italian, Greek, and Latin. Course in history, mathematics, geography, the fine arts, the useful arts, and in accomplishments generally. 4. Residence

in different cities and towns, and learning all things relating to them on the spot. 5. The proper apportioning and blending of exercise, amusement, study, attention to health, society, drawing, observation, and all other requisite modes and sources of improvement. 6. Paris to be the chief place of residence, where all sorts of instruction can be most readily obtained, and where the best teachers can be procured on the easiest terms. 7. Excursions, for the improvement of the more advanced youths, to be made to London, Edinburgh, Dublin, Rome, and such other places of science, literature, taste, and the arts, as experience and judgment might indicate." ' pp. 270, 271.

This plan of education was readily adopted by those parents to whom it was proposed by president Holley, and his arrangements were made to carry it into effect. On his arrival, however, at New Orleans, he was waited upon by gentlemen of that place, with propositions for a different undertaking. They suggested the idea of forming a literary institution in the neighborhood of that city. After considerable hesitation in abandoning his former plan, Dr Holley finally determined to accede to the new propositions, and engaged with characteristic ardor, in the project of founding a college near New Orleans. But under the influence of the extreme heat of the month of July, combined with the fatigues incident to the formation of his new establishment, his health soon became impaired, and he deemed it necessary to leave New Orleans for the North. On his passage to New York, he fell a victim to the terrible fever of the tropics. Human nature, in the varied catalogue of its sufferings, seldom presents a scene of distress, greater than that depicted to us in the following passage.

' Three days and nights, the storm without, and disease within, continued their force unspent. One and another of the crew fell victims, while others sunk and rose again. Such medicines were administered as are employed in common cases, and as were compatible with the situation of the sufferers; a situation but little adapted to the comforts and necessities of the sick. Rest and quietness were out of the question. A still, dark room, a bed of suitable dimensions, with constant and careful attendants, any one circumstance included in the word *home*, had been more than luxury. Let those who would learn the full meaning of that dearest of all names, experience a distressing, paralyzing illness at sea, and they will know its full import. Hitherto no one had expressed a fear of a dangerous disease on board, so little do we feel and understand impending evil. It now became calm, and there was

time and opportunity to attend to the suffering and the helpless. The danger of Dr Holley's situation became too apparent. His eyes were half closed, his mind wandering. The same medicines were repeated, the doses doubled, and all other means of relief applied, which the kind-hearted, though unskilled, in their goodness could command. The disease, which in its early stages might perhaps have been checked, had now acquired force and strength, and soon triumphed over one of the finest of constitutions, as well as most brilliant of intellects. The fifth of the disease, and the thirty-first of the month was the fatal day.

‘The sun rose in all the brightness and intense heat of a tropical region. It was a dead calm. Not a breath of air skimmed the surface of the sea, or fanned the burning brow of the sufferer. The writer of this article, who still lay in silent anguish, a speechless spectator of the scene, expected, while conscious of anything but distress, to be the next victim, and who, losing at times even all sense of suffering in the womanish feeling occasioned by the circumstance of there not being a female hand to perform the last sad offices of humanity, has a confused recollection of horror, of the solemn looks of the passengers pacing to and fro upon the deck, of a deathlike stillness, broken by groans, and half uttered sentences, and of a little soft voice trying to soothe the last moments, and to interpret the last accents of his dying parent. All this she heard, without sense enough to request to be carried to the spot, or to realize that it meant death. When the groans and spasms had ceased, it seemed to be only a release from pain, a temporary sleep. When all was hushed, and the report of pistols, and the fumes of burning tar announced the fatal issue, trusting in that Divine Being, into whose presence she expected soon to be ushered, believing, as far as recollection had exercise, that the separation was but for a little space, she heard, with the firmness of despair, and with silent awe, the parting waters receive the scarce breathless form of him who had been her pride and boast, as he had been the admiration of all to whom he was known, his winding sheet a cloak, his grave the wide ocean, his monument the everlasting Tortugas. All this she heard and lives.’

pp. 289—291.

The career of president Holley was thus prematurely closed, at the age of forty-six. Our country has certainly produced few persons, who have given indications of more brilliant talent; although, with the fate so common among literary and professional men, a general tradition of his superiority is nearly all that will go down to posterity. His efforts in writing were all of the class, that may be called occasional, and few even of these were committed to the press. Having formed himself

to a style of extemporaneous speaking, and not being called upon to encounter the after-toil of writing out his discourses, not a few of his highest strains of eloquence perished with the breath, in which they were uttered. To the publication of occasional performances he was more than commonly averse, and held the maxim, that a man can seldom do himself justice, or safely trust his reputation, in productions of that class.

In reviewing the incidents of Dr Holley's life, it is not easy to suppress the feeling, that he did not at any period of it find his way to the career best adapted to the character of his mind, and affording the fullest scope for the exercise of his talents. It was impossible, that he should not have been distinguished in any walk of life, and most distinguished he was unquestionably, in that which he pursued. But it may be doubted, whether his first choice of a profession, that of the law, might not have led him, on the whole, to a more uniformly successful and happy career.

We deem it not improper to add, that the work is published for the benefit of the orphan son of president Holley. This consideration, we trust, will secure it that circulation, to which its substantial merit entitles it. With whatever motive it is purchased, we feel confident, that it will be generally and permanently regarded as an interesting and valuable work, and a well deserved tribute to the memory of one of the most distinguished sons of America.

ART. VIII.—1. *The United States of North America as they are.* London. 1828.

2. *The Americans as they are ; described in a Tour through the Valley of the Mississippi.* By the Author of 'Austria as it is.' London. 1828.

THE two works named at the head of this article are of very different character. We shall presently address our American readers ; meantime, we would advise the English reader, after he has run over (literally run over) the first of them, to put it on the grate. If he trust either to the opinions or the facts of the writer, he will be as likely to be misled